

GEARY



THE ART NEWSPAPER

Some of the must-see exhibitions during Upstate Art Weekend in New York

The third annual iteration of the Hudson Valley arts festival features its biggest roster yet, with nearly 150 events and exhibitions

Gabriella Angeleti, Benjamin Sutton and Osman Can Yerebakan

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Rachel Owens: Real Fragile

Until 24 July at Geary Contemporary, 34 Main Street, Millerton

The Upstate-based artist Rachel Owens has numerous times brought her earthy sculptures to open fields, from Socrates Sculpture Park to the Berkshire Botanical Garden. Yet, given that she primarily works with wood, which she collects around upstate, a show in the region of Owens's source material is the perfect full cycle. The show features hefty sculptures and works on paper, each imbued with bold shades of the mother earth—but yet a little off. The subversion in fact stems from our own hands, the hubris-fueled human destruction of the flora and fauna. Owens implements broken glass, resin, charcoal or paint to wood that comes from two ash trees she had to fell from her land to their decay. “The stumps are important reminders, headstones of a sort,” the artist says. Owens left New York City for the countryside in 2020, where nature breathed her presence to the artist's practice. But she does not consider her practice a collaboration with nature, “because weather and the turning of the planet around the sun doesn't change”, she says. “Nature is setting the parameters—it's like gardening which I also like to do.”